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sculptor, Chatillon, the engraver, Germain, "a very clever goldsmith," and BOUL, "ébéniste, dont les ouvrages de marqueterie sont fort recherchés."

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THE engraver, Mr. Charles Waltner, has been in court at the suit of a print-dealer, M. Bourdois. He bought of the latter a copy of Rembrandt's Hundred Gulden piece for \$600, and refused to pay on the ground that the engraving had been sold to him above its real value and that it was not a first state. The plaintiff contended that there could have been no misunderstanding as to the state of the proof on the part of an experienced engraver. The court also took this view, and ordered Mr. Waltner to pay. The eminent Rouen collector, M. Dutuit, whose evidence was quoted in this case, states that copies of the first state of the Hundred Gulden piece are worth from \$7000 to \$16,000, and that only seven copies are known to be in existence. Proofs of the second state are worth from \$600 to \$1000.

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HABERT-DYS, to whose work a place of honor is given in this number of THE ART AMATEUR, is hardly known outside of France, except through the wide circulation of L'Art, the journal with which he is closely identified. He exhibited at the Paris Salon but once. This was in 1876. The catalogue of that year records two panels in faience by M. Jules Habert. The compound signature is only of recent date. The significance of the "Dys" I do not know.

* * *

THE following letter comes to me from Toledo, O.:

DEAR SIR: Apropos of your just criticism of the custom of the architect "sprawling his name" on the face of buildings designed by him, allow me to mention an involuntary advertisement of the kind in this city. A local architect designed a five-story building for a resident builder, at the corner of a principal business street. The builder accepted the design, but carried the building only to the second story. The architect protesting against this capitulation of his design with considerable heat, the builder revenged himself by placing a large memorial tablet in the front of the building, inscribed in chiselled stone, with the legend that the building was designed by Blank, Architect. And the victim has not as yet been able to rectify his plan accordingly, though it is reported now that the exigencies of business will force the builder to add the additional three stories, and thus carry out the original plan.

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THE New York correspondent of The (London) Artist found the picture gallery "about the least interesting part" of the Pedestal Fund Art Loan Exhibition; "though almost every picture was from a master hand, French artists only (!) were represented. There was, however, one fine picture, a military scene by Cōrot." "A military scene by Cōrot" would, indeed, have been both rare and interesting. It is too bad that no one saw this "one fine picture" except the correspondent of The Artist.

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SPEAKING of Oscar Wilde and his lecture, a contributor to The (London) Artist says:

"I think if the dissatisfied ones had read the lecture in book-form without being offended by the sight of what they thought affectation of pose in delivery (after all a very minor matter), they would have considered the suggestions practical, sensible, and free from all tinge of foolish æstheticism."

The affectations may seem "a very minor matter" to you, dear writer, but they were just what persons in this country paid to go and see. No one here would give a penny to read Mr. Wilde's commonplace twaddle about art. Even a cheap reprint of his "poems," with all their nastiness, did not sell.

* * *

THE Boston correspondent of the same London journal attributes the failure of Mr. Henry Blackburn's lectures in Boston on "Modern Art and Artists" to "his lack of adaptability and tact, and the display of what Mr. James Russell Lowell calls 'a certain condescension in foreigners.'" Perhaps, also, the fact that Mr. Blackburn has nothing original worth telling us had something to do with the matter. He is in no way distinguished. He is not even notorious. He has not been caricatured by Punch, nor does he wear knee-breeches.

* * *

FOLLOWING the example of the editor of the Paris Gaulois, the editor of The New York World is so indiscreet as to mix himself up in the Mackay-Meissonier controversy. Mrs. Mackay paid the artist \$14,000 instead of the \$15,000 demanded for her portrait, and then destroyed it. Now, The World publishes a jack-knife wood-cut of Meissonier, and flippantly remarks

that if the Frenchman does not like it "he can burn a copy of the paper containing it and consider himself even with the American Republic." Is it not possible to arrange a duel so that Meissonier or some one else may kill the jack-knife artist of The World?

* * *

MR. FEUARDENT has reason to be proud of the resolutions of confidence in him passed by the American Numismatic and Archæological Society. The learned gentlemen composing this body have done themselves honor, too, in recording their protest against the ignorance and vandalism of the so-called restorations of the patched-up collection of Cypriote antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum. Let Mr. Di Cesnola enjoy his meagre triumph.

"More true joy Marcellus exiled feels,
Than Cæsar with a Senate at his heels."

* * *

THE much-talked-of statue of Bolivar, which it is threatened to add to the collection of sculptural horrors in Central Park, I am assured is the result of a business speculation of which the Republics of the United States and Venezuela are innocent victims.

* * *

IF the drawing in Prang & Co.'s holiday cards were only equal to the average coloring of the same, each would veritably be a work of art. For Easter, this season, there are some charming conceits. In one card we see bright-hued butterflies, emerged from the chrysalis state, becoming absorbed in a flood of golden sunshine; but the chrysalis in the foreground resembles an old shoe. A beautifully colored card, "He is Risen," shows at the sepulchre an ill-drawn angel, whose left hand touches but does not hold what may be either a trumpet or a crowbar. In "Easter Harmony" we have a pretty female musical trio of angels, delicately printed on white satin, but were they not balancing with half-extended wings they could not hold on for a minute to the bough upon which presumably they are sitting. I do not wish to be captious, but Prang & Co.'s color work is so admirable one has a right to expect better drawing.

* * *

A NEW exhibition in New York is that of "The Painters in Pastel"—as the little band of young artists in this new path not too modestly style themselves. At the present writing the exhibition, which is to be held in the old Moore and Clark gallery, is not yet open, but from the contributions I have seen, by such leading spirits of the movement as William M. Chase, Robert Blum, and J. Carroll Beckwith, it is safe to say that the public will find in their work much that is new and interesting. The meretriciously smooth, soft, and pretty effects are characteristic of conventional pastel work looked for here in vain. Instead, one finds all the freedom and nearly all the vigor of oil.

* * *

SPEAKING on this subject reminds me of a catalogue of pastel paintings in Paris by General Cluseret, which is sent to me as a curiosity. It is an odd affair, printed in red ink to accord with the general's communistic tastes. This soldier-painter, it may be remembered, served in the Federal army during the war. My correspondent says: "Cluseret, the painter, came into existence after 1871 at Geneva, where he was the neighbor and companion of Courbet, who painted his portrait and gave him hints and explanations on the technique of his art. The Russo-Turkish war attracted Cluseret to the East. He appears to have lived and to be still living a very curious life in Turkey, and not one of the least curious incidents in this life is the fact that, remembering his talks with Courbet, he has taken to painting, and hopes to earn bread by the sale of his works. That a man of his age should have, by force of will, arrived at the result we see is wonderful, execrable as that result is, for it must never be forgotten that it requires a considerable amount of talent to paint even a bad picture."

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A MORE amusing exhibition of pretentious ignorance than that of Mr. Eugene Meeks's paintings at the rooms of the American Art Gallery has never been seen in New York. It is but just to the owners of the rooms to say that the arrangements for the display were made at a distance, and it was hardly possible for them to conceive of anything quite so shocking.

MONTEZUMA.

Dramatic Feuilleton.

Hamlet.—Good, my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?
Polonius.—My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Hamlet.

TWENTY years ago all the theatres in London licensed by the Lord Chamberlain were compelled to suspend their performances during the whole of Lent. The blood-and-thunder playhouses, on the Surrey side, not being licensed by the Lord Chamberlain, could keep their doors open; concerts could be given; circuses, menageries and other such shows could be witnessed by the public; but the regular theatres were closed and their companies went to play outside of London where the Lord Chamberlain had no authority and the drama was not regarded as irreligious.

The curious contradictions and anomalies of this custom made it so ridiculous that by degrees it was modified. First, the regular theatres were allowed to open except during Passion Week. Now the only days when performances are prohibited are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Although we have no Lord Chamberlain here, and although in this country there is no union of Church and State, yet Fashion takes the place of Law in regard to Lenten amusements. The theatres are not closed by an official edict; but the edict of Fashion prevents the majority of persons from attending them. Perhaps you will think that I ought to say the edict of Religion; but Religion forbids all amusements during Lent and yet the Opera flourishes because Fashion gives it a dispensation which does not extend to the theatres.

The excellent theatrical business which preceded Lent encouraged the managers to hope that they had secured attractions strong enough to induce the public to break the Lenten law. But, no; on Ash Wednesday the theatres were as empty as the churches were full. On the following Monday, such stars as Boucicault, McCullough, Goodwin, Robson and Crane were unable to attract crowded audiences, and even a new play excited no general curiosity.

One result of the bad Lenten business will be the early ending of the theatrical season. Another will be an unusually pious disposition on the part of the managers. For example, the Union Square Theatre will be closed during the whole of Passion Week, and the Madison Square, and probably Wallack's, on Good Friday. To be sure, a new play, called "The Fatal Letter," will be rehearsed at the Union Square while the front doors are shut; but that does not affect the public.

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THE abstinence of the public during Lent has been aggravated by the Spring season of Italian opera at the Metropolitan and Barnum's greatest show on earth, or any other planet, at the Madison Square Garden. With the opera to take away his wealthy patrons and the circus to empty his gallery, the theatrical manager may say, with Mercutio, "A plague on both your houses!" If one could conceive of a ship wrecked upon Scylla and Charybdis simultaneously, the theatrical manager might pose as the captain of that unfortunate vessel.

As a whist-player changes his suit when his opponents trump his tricks, so the manager changes his piece in the hope of escaping from the big trumps of Manager Abbey and the small trumps of Manager Barnum. Few, if any, of the New York theatres will have the same programmes at Easter which they advertised as great successes only three weeks before. But theatrical successes have long been discredited. The Wallack advertisement, "Positively last night in consequence of its triumphant reception by the press and public," has become historical.

Already "Orpheus and Eurydice," at the Bijou, has been replaced by "La Vie," an English adaptation of Offenbach's "La Vie Parisienne;" "The Merry War," at the Casino, will give way to "Falka," another importation from London, which has been tried at Philadelphia; "The Country Girl," at Duff's has been shelved and a too extravagant comedy, called "Red Letter Nights" produced; "Peck's Bad Boy" has succeeded "Confusion," at the Comedy Theatre; "Tribulations" is underlined to follow "Cordelia's Aspirations," at Harrigan and Hart's; "Separation" has been sent upon the road with the

Union Square Company, and the Madison Square management have selected "May Blossoms," to decorate the double stage where "Alpine Roses" have withered.

Managers are like the Bourbons, who learn nothing and forget nothing. It never occurs to them that, as in all other kinds of business, trade varies with the time of year. They never argue that a play which does not draw during Lent may overcrowd the house after Easter. Beyond the broad, general principle that fewer people attend the theatres during the summer than during the winter months they never venture. The only criticism they understand is that of the box-office. If a play does not draw, off with it! But what would they think of a dry-goods merchant who should throw away his whole stock because he could not sell summer goods during the winter season?

Old, experienced stars, like Boucicault and McCullough, ignore the experiences of years, return to New York during Lent and are very much surprised because the public do not go to see them. Manager Abbey brings Mr. Irving back to New York just before Passion Week; but perhaps he thinks that so intellectual an actor can always command audiences. With greater tact, Mr. Irving has arranged that Lawrence Barrett shall make his debut at the London Lyceum, on Easter Monday, when he will be sure of a crowded house and an audience anxious to be pleased. Will Mr. Barrett please them? Not if he adheres to his present version of "Francesca da Rimini," in which Dante's heroine listens to a reading from Lord Tennyson's Arthurian poems. But Mr. Barrett will begin his engagement with "Yorick's Love," in which there are no anachronisms.

Mr. Barrett has three points in his favor. In the first place, London is now very favorably disposed toward Americans. In the second place, Irving's unparalleled success in this country warms the hearts of his legions of friends and leads them to seek for some American actor whom they can equally appreciate. In the third place, Mr. Barrett is an intellectual tragedian, and the British public like intellect upon the stage better, even, than beauty or grace of physique. They have admired Mary Anderson; they may admire Lawrence Barrett.

It is no small undertaking to become the Sergeant Bates of the drama and carry the Stars and Stripes through a foreign country. But "the flag covers the cargo," according to international law, and Mr. Barrett will have all our good wishes for his success.

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"LADY CLARE," "On the Yellowstone," "Warranted," and "Peck's Bad Boy," are four new plays which have not yet been recorded in these columns. Three of them can be dismissed in a few paragraphs. "Lady Clare" demands more serious consideration, because it is the first genuine success at our leading theatre.

"Warranted" is an adaptation from the French by E. Lankester, of London, the author of "Our Guv'nor." It was produced at the Boston Museum, last October, and failed; but Nat Goodwin thought it funny and paid \$3500 for it. He brought it out at the Fourteenth Street Theatre and was obliged to withdraw it after a week's bad business.

The idea of "Warranted" is ingenious; but it is not carried out satisfactorily. A matrimonial agent forms a company to insure the domestic felicity of married people. Flirtations by the husband and frivolity in the wife are to be compensated on the accident insurance plan. But, in order to ascertain whether the risks of insurance are large or small, the agent orders his wife to test the husbands and employs a Bunthorne poet to test the wives. The consequences may be more easily imagined than described. The husbands take the advances of the agent's wife seriously and the wives compromise themselves with the poet.

To be amusing such a plot must be improper. Doubtless it was improper enough in the French. Mr. Lankester, in trying to make it decent, has made it dull. The action drags after the first act, and having nothing to laugh at, the audience begin to yawn. "Warranted" is to be rewritten for the provinces; but I should not like to warrant its success in any form.

"On the Yellowstone," at the Cosmopolitan, is only memorable as the last of the plays of Salmi Morse,

and because the suicide of the author followed close upon its failure. The rent and the company were unpaid; the theatre was closed and the scenery attached by creditors, and, in the midst of the confusion, the news came that poor Salmi Morse had been found drowned in the North River.

"Peck's Bad Boy" is a dramatization of the sketches which have appeared in Peck's Sun under the same title. The narrative is simply turned into dialogue, without any attempt at a plot or even a story. The fun is practical, rough and tumble, pantomimic and often coarse; but it makes the majority of the audience laugh and will be successful with the people who like variety shows. It is a pity that some English pantomime writer cannot study "Peck's Bad Boy." He would obtain valuable hints for novelties in his line of business, and I know of few lines in which novelties are more needed.

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"LADY CLARE," by Robert Buchanan, is very handsomely put upon the stage, at Wallack's; is cast to the full strength of the company—with the exception of the veteran John Gilbert—and is uncommonly well-acted. To the scenery and the acting it owes whatever success it has achieved; for as a play it is not original, and very conventional.

Unquestionably, Mr. Buchanan derived the notion of "Lady Clare" from Ohnet's French novel, "Le Maître des Forges," but he has also borrowed from "Old Men and New Acres," "Pique" and other plays. The weakness of the story is that, after the first scene, you know precisely how the play must end. The good acting interests you while waiting to see by what method this inevitable end is reached.

The heroine is an aristocratic beauty who is in love with her cousin, a rakish lord. The hero is a rich manufacturer who loves her for herself alone, and whom she despises because he is a plebeian. She loses her fortune; her cousin jilts her and engages himself to an heiress, and, just to show his lordship that she doesn't care, the heroine sends for the plebeian, requests him to renew his offer of marriage, which she has contemptuously rejected, and forthwith accepts him, to the astonishment of all concerned.

Inartistically crowded into the first act, these incidents would be absurd if the author were not evidently in a hurry to get at something newer and better. This comes in the second act, where the hero and heroine return home after their marriage, and, for the first time, Lady Clare realizes what she has done. She begs her husband to allow her to leave him. She confesses that she does not love him and only married him from pique. He declares that he will not be made the laughing-stock of her acquaintances and insists that she shall conduct herself as his loving wife in public, although in private they shall lead separate lives.

The first act, you observe, is almost identical with the first act of "Pique." The second act is a chapter from "Le Maître des Forges." Surely, you know the rest of the story? It is as old as woman, who always desires whatever is withheld from her, as Eve coveted the forbidden fruit.

The heroine falls in love with her husband; but he thinks that she is still in love with her cousin. The rakish lord persecutes her with his attentions, and, being a dead shot, challenges the husband to a duel. The husband consents, having resolved to set the heroine free by his death. Of course she rushes in to prevent the duel; but, by a clever dramatic turn, she receives the bullet intended for her husband.

She does not die; for a fifth act is necessary, and death-scenes have been done to death of late. The cousin calls to thank her for trying to save his life. She informs him that she does not care about his life, but tried to save that of her husband, the only man she ever really loved. Need I tell you that the husband overhears this speech, clasps his wife in his arms and strikes—not the villain, but a tableau, as the curtain falls?

"Lady Clare" is advertised as "the hit of the season," at Wallack's. Let us see how long the season will last. But the piece is well worth seeing, because of Rose Coghlan's admirable acting as the heroine and because Osmond Tearle redeems his bad record of the present season by playing the quarrel scene very naturally and effectively.

Scotchmen are said to have no sense of humor, and Mr. Buchanan could think of no better comedy relief

to his serious scenes than the boy and girl love-making of the young brother of the hero and the sister of the heroine. But J. B. Buckstone and Adela Meador, who are very little people, look and act their infantile amour capitally and contribute in no slight degree to the pleasure of the evening.

Considered critically, "Lady Clare" is an improvement upon "Storm Beaten," by the same author, and the dialogue is written in good English; but Mr. Buchanan is still an amateur at stage-craft and should study Sardou for at least a year before compiling another play.

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THE chief feature of the Spring season of Italian opera is the advance of Madame Sembrich to the first place in the troupe and the retirement of Madame Nilsson. This is one of the results of the great success of the younger prima donna in the Western cities. Sembrich opened the season as Ophelia in the "Hamlet" of Ambroise Thomas, which is Nilsson's original character, written for her and created by her. Sembrich sang three times during the first week, crowding Nilsson into the matinée. In a word, it is Sembrich's season.

Until the new star be heard in "Lucia" her New York success will be undecided. But, during her first week, the New York press and public did not indorse the rapturous enthusiasm of the excitable Westerners. The audience on the opening night was not large and the critics ventured no farther than faint praises.

It is settled that Gye, of London, will be the director of the Metropolitan Opera House, next season, and manage it in conjunction with Covent Garden, London. This leaves Colonel Mapleson only Australia, and I trust that he will go there and flourish as an antipodean impresario. Hitherto he has always landed on his feet, and it will be a new sensation for him to do business on his head—relatively to London, I mean.

Manager Abbey, who retires from the Opera House is not at all ruined. On the contrary, his schemes for the future are as grand as ever. He has leased the London Lyceum for eight months of next year and will pay American stars there, commencing, as he did this season, with Mary Anderson.

Mr. Irving will play at the London Lyceum during May, June, July and August and will put upon the stage two grand dramatic revivals. In September he will return to this country, by way of Canada, and remain with us for eight months. He tells me that it is more than likely that he will produce a new play here, giving New York the "premiere" instead of London.

This is the most important theatrical news of the century. It is equivalent to the opening, for eight months, of a dramatic university for the education of American managers and actors. The influence of the Irving season upon the profession and the public cannot be overestimated.

The friends of Brander Matthews—more than Brander Matthews himself perhaps—have been annoyed by a cable item stating that H. Stephens accused him of having stolen the comedy "Marjory's Lovers," lately produced in London. Who, then, is H. Stephens? I take him to be the man who wrote the "Billee Taylor" libretto. If so he seems to me to be as incapable of writing a comedy as Brander Matthews is of stealing anything.

However, Mr. Matthews is fortunately able to prove that his comedy was written long before H. Stephens came to this country by the testimony of the friends to whom he read the play and of the managers to whom he submitted it.

This is the first time I have ever heard of any good result from hearing a play read, and I solemnly promise that I will endeavor not to be bored by playwrights in future.

But, although "Marjory's Lovers" is not a stolen play, "Deception," the mistletoe comedy at Wallack's was. It has been traced back to James Albery, who produced it in London under the title of "Married." It was a failure in London as it was here. Somebody must have obtained a copy of it from Albery and palmed it off upon Mr. Wallack as an original work.

I strongly suspect that "Deception" was one of poor Sothern's jokes. But it does not seem so funny now that he is dead.

STEPHEN FISKE.